

Labor Force Composition and Characteristics

The Johnston County Labor Force in 1970 was composed of 25,383 workers of whom 15,489 were males and 9,894 were females (1970 Census figures). The number of males sixteen and over amounted to 20,413. Dividing this by the number employed gives a labor participation ratio of 75.9 percent--roughly similar to the state figure of 77.4 percent. Among the females, the ratio is 43.4 percent--the comparable state figure is 46.5 percent.

For Lee County, the male and female labor participation ratios are 79.4 percent and 48.2 percent respectively. For Chatham County, they are 77.5 and 51.0 percent. In comparison, Johnston County is lagging behind the other three counties and the state.

In Selma, the 1970 Census showed that 924 males and 721 females, sixteen and above, composed the labor force of 1645 persons. While the Census figures did not disclose the exact number of residents sixteen and above, interpolation of some of the data would say that approximately 1,379 males and 1,739 females fit into this category. The resultant labor participation ratios are 67.0 percent and 41.5 percent respectively. The town thus compares unfavorably to Johnston County.

As mentioned previously, Johnston County experienced a net commuting loss exceeding 5,000 persons per day in 1970. Selma's low labor participation ratios not only reinforce the fact that more employment opportunities are needed within the county but that the commuting which is presently involved also acts as an employment barrier to those lacking an automobile.

Type of Employment

The following table depicts the type of employment engaged in by Johnston County and Selma residents from 1960 to 1970, keeping in mind that these figures reflect employment patterns of those who live in Johnston County, as many work outside the county.